

[17 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

Infiltration through Sea-route by Pakistan

†2707. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Coast Guard officers have since completed the enquiry in respect of the seizure of three Pakistani ships by them on 9th May, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the incidents of infiltration through the sea route by Pakistanis particularly in the south of Okha Coast in Gujarat Border have increased considerably; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government in view of the seriousness of the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The 39 crew members of the three Pakistani fishing boats apprehended on 9.5.2000 were found to be fishermen who had strayed into Indian Maritime Zone for better fish catch.

(c) No increase in infiltration have been observed.

(d) The Navy and the Coast Guard ship/aircraft conduct regular surveillance to protect our Maritime Zones and safeguard national interest in our Exclusive Economic Zone. Extensive surveillance by Coast Guard ships and aircraft is also undertaken in the sensitive areas.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.